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ABSTRACT

A teacher education program was developed to implement the competencies for nontraditional, career adults who have an undergraduate degree in a content area. The program features three main areas of instruction: (1) curriculum and foundations; (2) specialization area; and (3) application of theory. Each of these areas is presented through instructional modules, which are not separate courses, but include the essential elements of several courses. For example, the specialization area, Module 2: Communications, includes reading methods, diagnosis of reading problems, language arts, children's literature, speech, and social studies. Field experiences are required for modules, and research is emphasized throughout. The schema for the program is described in full and assessment for the competencies is also provided. (Author/JD)

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Providing Skills and Competencies for Beginning Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The skills and competencies needed for successful teaching are many. The Education Department at Marymount University spells out the competencies essential to high quality teaching and then aligns courses under these broad competency areas. The courses that are responsible for introducing, systematically teaching and, finally, reinforcing these competency areas are specified. A listing of the competencies and the behavioral outcomes expected are given in the paper.

The new NK-8th grade program that was developed to implement the competencies was designed for nontraditional, career adults who have an undergraduate degree in a content area. It has become very popular and has already produced a number of high quality graduates.

The program features three main areas of instruction: (1) curriculum and foundations; (2) specialization area; and (3) application of theory. Each of these areas are presented through modules of instruction. The modules are not separate courses, but include the essential elements of several courses. For example, the specialization area, Module II: Communications (9 semester hours), includes reading methods, diagnosis of reading problems, language arts, children's literature, speech and social studies. Field experiences are required for modules and research is emphasized throughout.

The schema for the program will be described in full and assessment for the competencies will also be provided.

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for

Beginning Teachers

by

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PROVIDING SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS

Teachers are one of the most valuable human resources in any country. They help develop the skills and competencies that will build the future strength of the nation because they work with the youth who are the promise of tomorrow. In this way teachers affect the economy, the creative products, the research that is done and even the type of government that will become the accepted standard for the nation. In the United States we strive to perpetuate a democratic form of government where people will be able to enjoy a quality of living that encourages research and the development of creative ideas. It was Thomas Jefferson who said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be". Democracy cannot endure where ignorance prevails. People are not born democratic; they learn the ways of freedom and democracy. Children are taught to value freedom in the home and in our schools by people who themselves have learned much in a free society. The education of our teachers, when considered in the context of national values, becomes our highest priority.

The United States is a great country in geographic size and in material and human resources. It was forged by many ethnic groups and is

called the melting pot because of this. The truth is that all the ingredients did not melt in the mixture, and some of the cherished traditions and customs of many sub-cultural groups remain with us to enrich our heritage. The melting pot is still receiving many people from troubled countries and this is contributing to continuing change. Teachers need to be prepared to work with children from a diversity of backgrounds and with those who demonstrate a range of developmental levels. In order to do this, they will need to have considerable knowledge of the world in which they live, and of the cognitive developmental abilities of children.

In addition to the need for knowledge, teachers must be able to utilize resources and the technology that will allow pupils to gain in skills. Technology, especially television and the computer, has brought about changes in magnum leaps. "We are living in a time of omnipresent technology that many of our citizens cannot comprehend, manage, or operate, a situation with profound ramifications for our national defense, our economic development, and the quality of our lives" (Lemmon, 1986, p. 5). This condition should not exist in a country where education is readily available to all. It is essential that we prepare our future teachers so that they can manage the technology and can train pupils to use technology effectively. New technologies and old values meet in the present and hold the key to a better future for all individuals and to a higher quality of life for everyone.

It is the responsibility of the University to provide prospective teachers with the tools to function in this complex, changing world. Therefore, we have developed a program that will strengthen the liberal arts base for future teachers and will also provide for a wide range of teaching strategies. There seems to be general agreement that "Americans need to know more" (U.S. News & World Report, Sept. 28, 1987, p. 94). We plan to provide more information, more opportunities for problem solving and more in the way of field experiences that will aid our students in becoming superior teachers.

PROGRAM RESEARCH BASE

The research done by the Carnegie group produced A Nation Prepared (1986) in which there were strong recommendations for additional content requirements from the arts and sciences for prospective teachers. An undergraduate major in liberal arts was suggested. The Carnegie Report strongly recommended "elimination of undergraduate education programs". There were other reports that followed, such as, (1) the Holmes Group (1986) and (2) the Governors' Report from the 50 states (1986), as well as, (3) the Special Commission on Education from the Commonwealth of Virginia set up by Governor Baliles which was published in October, 1986 entitled "Excellence in Education: A Plan for Virginia's Future".

The experts suggested that a much more extensive background in the disciplines of the sciences, mathematics and the liberal arts was needed for all teachers. They contended that the complexity of our society required better teaching and better educated teachers. This might be provided either in a five year undergraduate program that focused on a content major at the same time the requisite education courses were being taken or in a graduate degree program. With either option ". . . .the program should facilitate a gradual, systematic, and guided induction into the profession of teaching, and the relation of theory to practice in the program should be obvious and readily understandable by all" (Scannell & Guenther, 1981, p. 9). A careful, thorough introduction into the teaching profession that would accommodate more direct experience in the schools and more practical experience was one of the aspects of teacher education that was considered in designing a program for beginning teachers that would provide skills and the competencies needed to function in a complex world.

Several research sources have been explored to extrapolate the essence of expert opinions as to the best possible education for today's teacher. In general the expert's recommendations and suggestions indicate the need for more extensive coverage of the liberal arts and more background in science and mathematics for elementary teachers. Houston & Newman (1982) say that, "Introductory liberal arts courses have the potential for increasing

prospective teachers' love of learning, revealing the connections between academic study and the reality of human endeavors, and enriching their vision of and commitment to a better future education" (p. 1881). This may present a somewhat grandiose picture of the long range effects of liberal arts education, but it does speak to the idea that a good liberal arts education involves more than the mere consumption of facts. There are practical, problem solving tasks involved in learning the liberal arts and more experience in these will help the student to become involved in defining and solving the problems in his/her major.

Number of years of education, content major, quality and length of field experience and special population needs have been considered by experts. Schubert (1986), Lundgren (1985) and other experts were consulted in the development of the "New Marymount Program". The research and opinions of these experts have provided background ideas for the program.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

Professional education at Marymount University is built on a well developed liberal arts and science base. The following statements will show clearly the philosophy undergirding the professional education program that is presented here:

* The education of teachers and school administrators is a joint responsibility shared by the School of Education and Human

Services and other schools within the University and the public schools of the Commonwealth.

* Teacher education students should meet the general requirements of the University at a high level. The liberal arts and the science courses in which they enroll should be carefully planned and evaluated to provide a cohesive background in content for prospective teachers.

* All teachers and administrators need a strong background in professional education. Academic knowledge is of little use if teachers cannot convey that knowledge to help pupils learn.

* Quality education programs integrate class work and field experiences.

* Effective education programs take into account the individual and cultural diversity of administrators, teachers and the prospective pupils.

* Educators should assume a leadership role in recognizing special needs populations, and in providing effective learning opportunities for them.

* Education has an organizational and administrative structure that is unique.

* There are academic, professional and legal groups that are involved with education as a profession.

* Research is an integral part of any graduate program at a university and those who aspire to leadership roles in the classroom or in an administrative capacity should be knowledgeable about the significant research in their field.

* The use of new technology (all forms of media and computer) is necessary if educators are to serve their pupils efficiently.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The population we serve at Marymount University comes from the greater Washington area, as well as, the Eastern Megalopolis Coast area. Many of the students coming into the program are making definite career changes and are eager to become involved in the education profession. Therefore, the program is streamlined through the use of modules of instruction. These modules serve to reduce the redundancy that is often noted in teacher education programs. All course work is offered in the evening and field experience placements are arranged by the University, but the actual times for carrying out these experiences are left to the student to determine with the approval of the cooperating teacher. The program course requirements with the broad purposes of each module/course are as follows:

Module I (9 semester hours)

This module combines historical, philosophical and cultural foundations of education with the implications of these for the curriculum. Planning for the special needs child will be an integral part of the module, and specific attention will be given to subcultural differences and the range of exceptionality for which one must provide equitable education. The educational system and the role of various organizations in this structure will be considered. The curriculum and instruction emphasis will explore such things as scope and sequence of instruction in the various content areas, the most effective ways to build units of instruction, the development of objectives and appropriate ways to evaluate the curriculum. Teacher responsibilities and administrative management skills will be emphasized, as well as the legal implications of classroom behavior.

Module II (9 semester hours)

The module combines reading, diagnosis of reading problems, language arts, social studies, and children's literature. Each component area considers the nature of the reading process and the major approaches and skills needed to enhance learning in the classroom. The skills of literacy are complimented with the study of the reading problems children experience and techniques for diagnosing and remediating instruction to fit individual needs. Furthermore, this module will emphasize the language arts curriculum and demonstrate how children's literature and the social studies can be taught to reinforce the total language arts. The module will provide information and an emphasis on poetry, literature, and skills development strategies related to geography, economics and other social sciences. Supervised practicum experiences with pupils who are having reading difficulties will provide the opportunity to implement the techniques that have been introduced.

Module III (6 semester hours)

This module combines skills areas such as mathematics, science, testing and study skills in a unified manner where the principles of learning, organizing and applying abilities are emphasized. These areas of concentration are seen to inter-relate well because each of these areas require a sizeable build-up of specific skills that have a definite structure. Methods for teaching mathematics and science to young children will be demonstrated.

Assessment techniques for examining curricula in these areas and strategies for evaluating teacher and pupil performance will also be explored. Skills such as outlining, developing laboratory records, text/kit utilization, and computational skills will be emphasized.

Module IV (3 semester hours)

The module provides an emphasis on areas of creativity such as communication, art, music, and movement enhancement. It examines the areas of creativity and problem solving in a general way and proceeds from definition to research and testing in these areas. The final focus of the module is on the uses of creativity and problem solving in the schools.

Research/Clinic Practicum (3 semester hours)

The course introduces students to research structure and allows them to carry out a mini research project. Three types of research are stressed: naturalistic, clinical and experimental. The design of individualized instructional programs to meet the needs of pupils as determined by diagnostic evaluations and, the research process that pupils in elementary and middle schools can utilize will also be explored.

Computers and Technology in the Classroom (3 semester hours)

This is an introductory, hands-on course designed to acquaint prospective teachers with the instructional uses of the microcomputer, evaluation of software, and elementary programming.

Student Teaching (6 semester hours)

This course provides information and guidance to the prospective student teacher that will enable him/her to successfully complete the student teaching experience. Stress will be placed on policies, practices, and procedures which are integral to the student teaching process. A review of professional ethics, standards, and expectations will be included. Experiences with placement in the profession will be provided, as well. Curriculum and strategy for classroom management will also be explored as the student participates in two six weeks experiences. One of these will be at the primary level (e.g. 2nd grade) and the other at the middle grades or intermediate level (e.g. 6th grade).

I Admission Procedures

Students must apply for formal acceptance into either of the Master's programs presented here. Acceptance will be based on a satisfactory Miller Analogy Test score (usually considered as a minimum of 40), a 2.7 G.P.A. and two letters of recommendation. The graduate M.Ed. degree will be granted from the School of Education and Human Services upon satisfactory

completion of the NK-8 Master's degree program. Actually, a formula has been worked out for acceptance based on the two quantitative measures. This was done because people who completed degrees some time in the past were not as apt to have had the questionable benefit of grade inflation. The formula for acceptance is as follows:

$$\begin{array}{lll} & \text{GPA} \times 200 & \\ + & & = \quad 1000 \text{ points needed for admission.} \\ & \text{MAT} \times 12 & \end{array}$$

The Dean of the School of Education and Human Services or a designated program coordinator will meet with each applicant and will assess the undergraduate General Education component and the major for adequacy and recency. Courses, in addition to the 39 Master's degree credit courses, will be designated at the time of this conference. Any courses noted will be required prior to a signature for the NK - 8 endorsement.

In addition, all NK-8 Master's candidates will need two minor areas of content in which they have 15 or more graduate hours. They may choose from these four areas: Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics or Science.

II Modules

Structure of the Modules:

1) The program provides modules of instruction rather than a collection of specific courses. These modules would require both class time and field experience that would be the equivalent of the standard semester hours shown for each module.

2) The modules require that a team of teachers work out the shared responsibility of the courses in advance, but do not require team teaching as such. That is, all members of the instructional group do not need to be in the instructional setting at the same time. They do need to know how the objectives fit together, however, and how and when their section of the teaching responsibility takes place.

3) Advanced planning as a group would be necessary for faculty and provision for regular meetings of the group would be essential for on-going planning and evaluation.

4) The modules that are part of the design abolish individual courses as a measure of progress and break down the lockstep procedure of one course at a time (Hass, 1983).

5) The module provides for a measure of flexibility and combines areas where redundancy previously existed in education programs.

Methodology of Modules:

1) Modules involving the crucial elements of methodology and skills have been developed based on the idea that there are common learnings that can be provided in an efficient, organized manner. Lundgren (1985) says that, ". . . any curriculum for public education must be built on a selection and organization of what is to be learned" (p. 82). This, then, is the objective of the modular approach developed in the program presented here.

2) The research/clinic practicum and each module will emphasize not only the research that has been done, but also the practical implications of the research for education. The writing skills that are required of graduate students are developed here.

3) The proposed model includes on-site field experiences early in the program. "Students must be given opportunity to reconstruct their experience, study its possible meanings, and interpret its significance for their own sense of meaning and direction" (Schubert, 1986, p. 17).

4) Because experiential interpretation becomes increasingly important in professions like teaching and educational administration, experiences at several grade levels with diverse populations have been built into the program. This should assure that the trainee makes a wise choice for the selection of a grade for student teaching or internship, and an even more reliable choice at the time of employment.

5) The flexible specialized area will allow a number of variations around the central education theme. Several areas of concentration at the University could develop a collection of courses around a specialty and utilize the foundations and application courses to complete a Master's degree. The sample that is demonstrated here deals with an NK-4 model.

III Field Experiences/Student Teaching Component for NK-8 Master's

"Our location in a large urban area permits us to use our nation's capital as a learning resource for student internships, clinical experiences in hospitals, practice teaching in public and private schools, and, for many of our graduates, career placement" (Catalog, 1990-91, p. 7). In fact, all majors at the University are required to participate in an internship during the last phase of their program.

The students who choose to prepare for teaching begin their field experience in public schools and in community service areas as a part of

their first course in the Curriculum and Foundations Module. With each course where field experience is required, the student are given a list of specific objectives. Identical materials are provided for the principals who lecture and for the cooperating teacher who works with the University faculty member to assess the quality of the student's involvement.

Field experiences are required throughout the program. A total of 480 or more hours is built into the program beginning with the Curriculum and Foundations Module. The courses that apply to the two programs being submitted are somewhat different and require different types of field experience. All courses at the graduate level that require field experiences are listed here.

The courses and number of hours at this level are as follows:

ED 509 Module I - 20 hours of field experience in a community related activity.

ED 518 Module II - 20 hours of tutoring and/or working with small groups of children in the area of Reading and Language Arts will be required.

ED 527 Module III - 20 hours of tutoring and/or working with small groups of children in Mathematics and Science will be required.

ED 550 Research/Clinic Practicum - 30 hours will be required in a classroom at the student's choice of level.

ED 570 A - Student Teaching - 420 hours (12 weeks) of actual classroom teaching will be done at this same time. For the NK-8 Master's program, two levels of student teaching are required and each level will complete a total of 5 full days for 6 weeks. One level will be NK-4th grade and the other will be the 4th-8th grade level. The future teachers will be required to develop and teach units in their areas of specialty. They will be required to teach the total class/es for the full day in the school/s in which they are placed. At least 4 weeks of full time teaching will be required of all student teachers. They will also participate in seminars on campus where research and theory are stressed as it relates to their experiences.

EDUCATIONAL COMPETENCY BASE

A table has been developed that spells out the competencies required of the prospective teachers in the Marymount program. The courses that are responsible for introducing, systematically teaching and, finally, reinforcing these competency areas are specified. For a sample of content outline, behavioral objectives and examination questions see Appendices A, B, and C. The competencies listed here are the basis for instruction in the new program.

I. Education as a Profession

II. Human Development

III. Planning for Instruction
IV. Creating a Learning Environment
V. Providing for Different Learning Modes
VI. Providing for Special Needs Children
VII. Methodology and Style
VIII. Classroom Management and Control
IX. Classroom Skills and Social Responsibility
X. Analytical Skills

COLLABORATION EFFORTS WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A continuing collaboration takes place between the public and private schools and the students and faculty involved in the Marymount programs.

Work with principals in the presentation of lectures and tours of schools as a regular part of the Curriculum and Foundations course. This will continue because the administrators provide a realistic picture of the structure of a school system and are able to convey this to students clearly. They have worked with us on a cooperative basis in the past and have indicated that they wish to continue to do so in the future.

One principal and one classroom teacher serve on the Teacher Education Committee. The objectives of the Committee are to provide suggestions about field experiences and the level of competence that is

expected in the schools. The Teacher Education Committee considers acceptance of students into the education program, student teaching applications, seminar topics for student teachers, certification revisions and generally serves as the governing body for the processing of students through the program.

Because of the new programs and the BTAP requirement, special first year teacher workshops are carried out on a regular basis at no cost to the participants. Presentations and small group interaction are planned around announced topics and these are developed based specific needs of the first-year teachers. Areas like "Closure" are dealt with as the need arises. Question and answer sessions are allowed at each meeting. An Advisory Board of public school personnel from Arlington, Falls Church, Fairfax and Alexandria has been organized to provide ideas and share needs with the Teacher Education Committee (TEC).

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The students in the NK-8 Master's degree programs take 5 sub-tests of the National Teacher's Examination. They take both the Early Childhood specialty and the Elementary specialty exams. The scores on these tests are examined by the program Coordinator and by the Dean. The scores that are low are scrutinized by the Teacher Education Committee and additional

course work is required for students who have problems in a specific area. For example, if the student fails the Communication portion of the exam, s/he will be required to take additional English and Communication courses prior to retaking the exam.

All teachers employed in Virginia are given a provisional one year certificate. During the first year of employment they must undergo the BTAP (Beginning Teacher Assistance Program) evaluation process. This consists of evaluations by three, independent, experienced judges and students must pass 12 out of 14 competencies. The scores for the BTAP findings are forwarded to the University. These are examined at Teacher Education Committee meetings and also by the Dean, the Coordinator, and the Director of Field Experiences. Seminar training sessions have been developed to improve on areas where there have been any failures and, even for areas where graduates pass but several may have missed a category.

Interviews of a random sample of students are completed each year. This is done to collect attitudinal data which can be used to provide services that are more satisfactory to the students. Problem areas are noted and scheduling changes, as well as requirements in other areas are adjusted on a yearly basis.

A Comprehensive examination based on the course work and the final evaluation of the student teaching experience is the capstone of the NK - 8

program. This exam builds one hundred points on multiple items and one hundred points on the performance of the student in the final observation of the student in the student teaching experience.

The instrument that is referred to in the "Weakness" statement is currently being developed. The programs are new and the instrument that is envisioned is a 200 item test that will draw on all the courses that the students have taken in a particular program and will relate specifically to the Competencies that serve as the basis for the program. Many items must be developed in a data bank before this can be administered to students. A beginning sample of 100 items have been collected to date and the faculty is working to provide another sample by the end of this academic year.

Graduate Follow-up & BTAP

There are two types of alumni follow-up done at Marymount University. One of these is carried out in the Office of Institutional Research. This annual questionnaire examines employment areas, test score (NTE) results, attitudes toward the University and the particular programs in which the students were involved. This information is organized and reported back to the Deans and faculty by the Director of Institutional Research in a bound volume. The results are shared and discussed informally and at School faculty meetings. Short-fall areas are noted and suggestions for remedying these are explored.

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ED 509 CURRICULUM AND FOUNDATIONS

Competencies

Content Outline

Foundations

Introduction

I i. teaching as a career
ii. reform movement
IX iii. responsible adults

A. History of Education

I 1. important historical figures
2. growth of the system
3. persons of note today

B. Philosophical Bases

I 1. important philosophies
2. personal educational philosophy
VII 3. behavioral implications of specified philosophies

C. Cultural Diversity

1. culture and sub-culture - definitions
IX 2. feelings related to cultural groups
VI 3. problems of families from diverse backgrounds
4. leaders of minority groups
VIII 5. legal interventions to provide equity
6. implications for literacy instruction
6. second language problems
7. implications for literacy instruction

D. Exceptionality

II, IV 1. normal and abnormal - definitions
2. practices in screening/classification
3. special needs group
IX 4. professional associations related to groups
I 5. state and federal involvement

E. Learning Disabilities

VI 1. public law 94-142 definition
VI 2. criteria for identifying
3. proposed causes
X 4. diagnostic approaches
I 5. trends

F. Top and Bottom

VI 1. giftedness
2. charateristics of gifted/talented children
VI 3. mentally retarded
4. learning variable deficits with mentally retarded
III 5. curricular modification needed

7. a knowledge of a range of abilities including gifted/talented and mentally retarded children by:

VI	7.1	explain the major components of the AAMD definition of mental retardation.
IX	7.2	defend continued funding of early intervention programs for at-risk children.
I, VI	7.3	discuss how the mildly retarded population have changed over the last ten years.
VI	7.4	describe some identifiable causes of moderate to profound retardation
X	7.5	describe assessment procedure used with persons having severe handicaps.
II, III	7.6	compare the top-down or funtional curriulum with the bottom-up or developmental curriculum.
IV, X	7.7	contrast commonly accepted views of intelligence and creativity - consider the position of Terman, Guilford, and Torrance.
VI	7.8	describe the problems of definition and identification in the area of gifted and talented.

8. a knowledge of the educational system by completing the following exercises:

I	8.1	examine the elements that make up our educational system (e.g. curriculum, administrative structures, and teacher organizations).
I, IX	8.2	identify educational issues and the variety of techniques for dealing with these issues in the U.S. such as: magnet schools in the area the processes used in micro teaching flexible scheduling computer assisted instruction computer managed instruction
IV, IX	8.3	distinguish verbally between an open and a self-contained classroom.
I	8.4	examine the structure of one school district and provide a chart that will explain its operational process in full.
I	8.5	differentiate between the roles of the superintendent, the principal and the classroom teacher.
I	8.6	recognize the organizations that serve the teachers and administrators in the United States.
I, IX	8.7	compare the systems of education from two other countries with our own. One non-Western country and one Developing country should be used.
I, IX	8.8	identify several areas of mutual concern in the global education community.

9. the ability to translate background knowledge into curricular applications by completing the following exercises:

III	9.1	differentiate between curriculum and instruction.
II, III	9.2	describe the curriculum content in the areas of early childhood, elementary education, high school, and college.
III, VII	9.3	critique several lesson plans based on models.
III	9.4	develop a unit of study for an identified group identified content.
V	9.5	demonstrate skill in the use of print, dry mounting, making color lifts and transparencies as a part of the unit where the incorporation of media will allow the unit to be used in the classroom.

petencies

X ___32. If this happens, then this will follow, is an example of:
a. pre-operational thinking
b. concrete operational thinking
c. hypothetico-deductive thinking
d. all of the above

IV ____33. In the learning situation, there are several variables that may add to or detract from the acquisition of information. Three major areas for assessment of learning are:
a. the learner, pre-assessment, curriculum flowcharts
b. the learner, the teacher, Flanders' Interaction Scale
c. the learner, the curriculum, the teacher
d. the learner, the curriculum, the Stufflebeam and Worthen Scale

II ____34. In concept formation, we:
a. name the differences and ignore similarities
b. identify and name the differences temporarily
c. use judgement and intuition to identify differences only
d. name similarities and temporarily ignore differences

I ____35. When people take the 5th amendment, they are basically indicating that they:
IX a. will not incriminate a friend
b. do not know the answer
c. cannot remember the circumstance
d. will not incriminate themselves

II ____36. Pre-operational children tend to focus on one aspect of a situation and neglect
III others ad this often leads to illogical conclusions. Piaget calls this:
a. egocentrism
b. classification
c. centration
d. assimilation

III ____37. A lesson plan is an example of short term planning. An example of long term planning is a:
a. unit
b. question sequence
c. motivator
d. none of the above

III ____38. One of the reasons for building a unit of instruction is that:
IV a. hard work is its own reward
b. proper sequencing of ideas is important to learning
c. it does not allow for individual differences
d. all of your work is done before you even meet the pupils

III ____39. The first part of a unit plan is:
a. analysis of content
b. behavioral objectives
c. evaluation
d. overview